

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
COURANT

M - 170,459

S - 219,365

FEB 19, 1977

Turn the Admiral Over

Admiral Stansfield Turner will be interrogated by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Tuesday on his way to expected easy confirmation as President Carter's choice to head the CIA. It is mandatory that the questions deal with more than polite amenities; the nation is entitled to a deep look into the man upon whom so much of its security, and honor, will depend.

The naval career of this 53-year-old prospective CIA director is public knowledge, and it suggests a brilliant intellect and uncommonly universal grasp of naval affairs. Nor is Admiral Turner a stranger to the fields of philosophy, politics and economics. In question is not his naval expertise or his marks as a military strategist, but what he perceives as the measure and the mission of the world's only other superpower, Soviet Russia.

As CIA director, Admiral Turner would serve as primary adviser to the President on foreign intelligence, and would be responsible for setting national intelligence requirements and priorities. In short, the Senate Committee will be assessing a man who will undertake the awesome task of keeping us informed about everything impinging upon our national security, and thus to help shape the direction and degree of preparedness such intelligence dictates.

Admiral Turner already has indicated in published material his belief that growing Soviet military power

has produced a situation where basic decisions depend on judgments which transcend the power of military men. Current overkill capacities of both the United States and the Soviet Union support this view. Turner also cogently dismissed simple comparisons of the weaponry of both countries, stating that an accurate measure of relative strengths depended not only on offensive and defensive capabilities but also upon technological developments, base facilities, national resolve and alliance solidarity. Must we conclude we will know what we need to know only when it is too late?

Admiral Turner finds like minds in Pentagon chief Harold Brown and Paul C. Warnke, nominee to head the U.S. arms control agency, both of whom maintain Soviet advantages are militarily insignificant, and would be of importance politically only if exaggerated by national leaders. Must we conclude these statements are based on reliable readings?

Simplistic as it may seem, the Senate Select Committee should probe deeply to find out whether Admiral Turner's predicated notions about shrinking political options and higher levels of risk are strong enough to dampen the role of the CIA. Accurate assessments in this fateful field demand inspired, dynamic leadership, because we can afford neither to under-estimate nor to over-estimate the strength and intentions of our potential and purposely unpredictable Eurasian adversary.